



(Photo by Sgt. Raymond Kokel 1-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Youth center grand opening

As city council members and tribal sheiks watch, Allentown, Pa. native Capt. Adrian Spevak, commander, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment assists an Iraqi boy with the cutting of the ribbon marking the grand opening for the youth center in Mushada, Iraq March 22.

Repaired truck symbol of life, courage

By Spc. Chris McCann
2-10 Mtn. Public Affairs

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq - The truck has clearly been in Iraq for awhile. The hood is a dusty green against the sand-colored cab and trailer attachment, and the undercarriage shows some hard miles. But the engine purrs like a kitten, and the two Soldiers standing under its massive grille wear broad smiles and Army Commendation Medals.

The truck, a heavy equipment transport

truck or HETT, is used by Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) to recover vehicles in combat areas, usually after they are damaged by improvised explosive devices. But on Jan. 31, this particular truck hit an IED. Shrapnel fragments damaged the engine, the fuel tanks and the transmission - along with almost everything else that made the truck run - and also tore through a Soldier's arm.

Spc. David Shulda, a native of

Crestville, Ill., and a mechanic with the 2nd BSTB, was sitting in the passenger's seat when the IED exploded under the truck. He was bleeding heavily from his arm, and as soon as driver Spc. Shawn Meinholz brought the vehicle to a stop, fellow mechanic Spc. Steven Bodruk began treating Shulda, putting a tourniquet on his arm.

"I barely kept the truck out of a canal,"

See **Truck** Page 4

Paratroopers refresh medical skills

By Spc. Juliana Morrison
4-25 Inf.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq - When going on a mission, Soldiers count on one another for protection and they take comfort in the fact that their comrades can help in any situation, even when they are injured. This kind of security comes with trust and preparation.

Paratroopers with Company B, 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division brushed up on their lifesaving skills with a combat lifesaver refresher course.

The class was given by BSTB medic Sgt. Desire Sanchez, originally from Jacksonville, Fla.

"CLS is usually given by the first responders to an accident," said Sanchez. "It is important to keep Soldiers



(U.S. Army photo)

Paratroopers from 725th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division practice lifesaving skills during medical training on Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Iraq.

up to speed and to make sure that their medical skills stay current, especially when in a combat zone."

The training for the paratroopers focused on various lifesaving skills. These skills

include establishing an airway via nasal pharyngeal airway (NPA), administering fluids through intravenous (IV), and needle chest decompression, which relieves air pressure inside

the chest. Soldiers also worked with improvised tourniquets and field dressings.

With the supervision from medics from 725th BSB, paratroopers were able to get a real feel for what it is like to give and receive first aid.

"The class is definitely a good thing. Practicing on an actual human being allows you to see their reaction and movements, you can get an idea what it's like to do it for real," said Pfc. Joseph Davenport a native of Standish, Maine.

The course is given every six months to ensure paratroopers will be ready for combat injuries. For Staff Sgt. Michael Martinez from Denver, Colo., the refresher course gives paratroopers rare opportunities.

"This refresher course is good because it allows us to sustain skills we don't use everyday," said Martinez.

Arabic Phrase of the Day

saaa

**Defined:
hour**

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 79
Low: 54



Tomorrow

High: 81
Low: 54



Saturday

High: 82
Low: 52

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Baghdad in Brief

Eagles find weapons caches, detain suspected terrorists

By Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie
2-10 Mtn. Public Affairs

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq - Iraqi and Multi-National Division - Baghdad forces detained 38 suspected terrorists and, discovered an improvised explosive device and seized five weapons caches south of Baghdad March 27.

Soldiers of the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and the 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) participated in Operation Eagle Thunder III, an operation intended to deny terrorists safe haven within the southern region of Iraq.

Of the suspected terrorists detained during the operation two were wanted for ties to terrorism, five were carrying illegal weapons and four others were in a vehicle that contained an AK-47, four magazines and a hand grenade.

In the caches were anti-aircraft propaganda, an insurgent information booklet, two bags of homemade explosives, a rocket propelled grenade launcher with five rockets, a 122mm projectile, a propane tank and various small arms ammunition.

Later in the operation a command wire IED was discovered near the road near the al QaQaa weapons facility, southwest of Yusufiyah.

The detainees are being held for further questioning.

The contents of the cache were destroyed during a controlled detonation conducted by the explosive ordnance disposal team.



(Photo by Spc. Christopher Lopez 2-12 Cav.)

Capt. Matthew Phillips inspects an Iraqi boy for cavities during the health clinic operation in southern Ghazaliya.

2-12 Cav holds free health clinic

By 1st Lt. Nicholas Paolini
2-12 Cav.

BAGHDAD-Iraqi Army and Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers put smiles on kid's faces during a health clinic operation on March 25. The clinic treated over 200 Iraqis from all over southern Ghazaliya, a neighborhood in northwestern Baghdad.

While the Iraqi Army provided security, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, medics screened the Iraqis to determine their health needs. If care was required, the battalion's physician's assistant, 1st Lt. Luis Lozada, examined the patients. The brigade dentist, Capt. Matthew Phillips, was also present and

serviced any dental requirements.

Since the make-shift clinic was at a school, the Soldiers took the opportunity to help the school kids out by donating school supplies. Teamed up with the Iraqi Army, the Soldiers gave out pens, pencils, paper, backpacks, soccer balls, newspapers, and various other items.

Company D came well stocked with boxes of medical supplies to provide care for the Iraqi people. The boxes consisted of ibuprofen, bandages and other medical supplies. The company also treated Iraqis with a variety of health problems, varying from eye and skin issues to ear infections. The Soldiers even gave out prescription medications for Iraqis with diabetes and hypertension.

Soldiers, truck are ready for battle after hitting an IED

Truck

From Page 1

Meinholz, a native of Manchester, N.H., said. "I lost control of the steering and the brakes."

A recovery team from Forward Operating Base Yusufiyah came out to bring the Soldiers to safety; Shulda was taken to a hospital immediately.

The truck was totaled, the Soldiers said.

"At that point, we thought it was too damaged to fix," said Meinholz. "In fact, it was totaled. But we opted to fix it."

For their engagement by hostile forces, Bodruk and Meinholz were awarded Combat Action Badges. The Army Commendation Medals were presented for the fact that the Soldiers saved a comrade's life and then brought the truck back to fully-mission-capable status.

"They're the hardest working guys we have," said motor pool administrative specialist Sgt. Lucian Ledbetter, a native

of Conway, Ark. "I knew they would get it done."

Ledbetter himself had a hand in the repairs, ordering more than 100 pieces and parts that the mechanics needed, including the new engine, winches and fuel tanks.

"It's simply outstanding, what they did," said Capt. Jason Anderson, a native of Crete, Ill., and the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BSTB. "It was way above their official skill level. They put hundreds of man-hours into this truck."

Some Soldiers thought that Bodruk and Meinholz wouldn't be able to restore the truck.

"People in other units said they couldn't do it," said Ledbetter. "They said the HETT should just be coded out and a new one requisitioned. But inside the unit, everyone had full confidence in these guys. Everyone messed with them about it, but no one ever really thought they couldn't get it done."

For Bodruk and Meinholz, it was



Spc. Shawn Meinholz with HHC, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. receives a congratulatory handshake from Col. Mike Kershaw, the commander of the 2nd BCT after being awarded a Combat Action Badge and an Army Commendation Medal March 23.

never a question.

"The battalion wouldn't have any recovery assets if we didn't fix it," said Bodruk. "We do 75 percent of our missions with that truck."

But it wasn't just for the battalion's mission that they poured their efforts into the truck.

"Shulda would've wanted it done," Meinholz said. "If he were here, (the damage) wouldn't have stopped him."

Shulda, who was taken to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, does physical therapy as his arm is healing, and regularly e-mails his friends in the battalion, letting them know he's regaining strength in his hand and arm. But he doesn't yet know that the truck he was in that night is back on the road now.

"Even though this truck is together again, we still don't have a Shulda," Bodruk said. "And not just as a co-worker, but as a friend."

"They did it because they were the ones in that truck that night," Ledbetter said. "It's more than a truck, to them - it's a symbol of their survival."



(Photos by Spc. Chris McCann 2-10 Mtn. Public Affairs)

Spc. Shawn Meinholz (right), a native of Middleton, Wisc., and a welder with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), and Spc. Steven Bodruk, a native of Manchester, N.H., and an air conditioning mechanic with the company, stand at attention in front of a Heavy Equipment Transport Truck after they were each awarded Combat Action Badges and Army Commendation Medals during a brief ceremony March 23.

3-5-6 MiTT makes progress despite challenges

By Spc. Alexis Harrison
2-1 Cav. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PROSPERITY, Iraq - A few months ago, Haifa Street was considered one of the most notorious places in Baghdad. The 4th Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment Military Transition Team had been training for the moment to reclaim that area and fight alongside their Iraqi brothers from the 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

As abruptly as the fighting ended, the team and its counterparts were reassigned to a different area in Hateen where they fought an equally aggressive enemy.

After spending more than two months gaining trust and rebuilding the structure of the neighborhood, the Soldiers, both Iraqi and American, were called upon to move to another area.

Now, the team and the Iraqi Army battalion patrol a predominately Shi'a sector just west of the International Zone. And after more than 90 days of tough lessons learned on Haifa, the team takes its training of their counterparts more seriously than ever.

Staff Sgt. Colin Davis said that although the move presents challenges, it's also proved to be good in many ways.

He said that staying in an area for too long can lead to complacency. He stressed the importance of learning how to adapt and overcome every challenge that's been placed on the Soldiers he fights with.

As much as they'd faced in the past, the team still knew how important it was to never lower its guard, because a Soldier can never predict what is going to happen on the ground.

For example, what started as a routine patrol through one of the neighborhoods in Docklia turned into a valuable lesson on how to react to contact.

A sniper fired upon the team's vehicles while they were entering the muhalla. Within seconds, the Soldiers reacted attempting to capture the sniper. The sniper had fled before the soldiers could get to him, but Maj. Chris Norrie said it's still a



(Photo by Spc. Alexis Harrison 2-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

4th Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment Military Transition Team commander, Maj. Chris Norrie, dismantles a makeshift sniper position atop a house where he and his team were shot at from March 19.

valuable lesson to know how to react when situations like this arise.

The original plan for the day didn't call for a lesson like the one that was taught. The team's plan was to check out the living conditions, fighting positions and overall attitude of the soldiers who stay out in the area.

Along with the security-related concerns, Norrie and his men wanted to spread a little cheer to a few children while they were in the area. Inside their trucks, they had several new backpacks that they wanted to give away, but all that changed when the team had to engage an insurgent.

Norrie said that when coming into a new area like Docklia, it's paramount to gain the people's trust and begin to make improvements to not only security but to essential services like water, sewage and school rebuilding.

Surprisingly enough, this brief brush with an anti-Iraqi insurgent would prove to be a useful to Norrie, the team and the Iraqi soldiers with them.

"The training doesn't stop, even when you go out in sector," said Staff Sgt. Buaka Tamu, Sierra Leon, West Africa, native and security chief with the team.

While many of the team's members acknowledge the suspicions that surround

the Iraqi security, they also make it very clear how important trust is to each and every one of them.

"We're a family," Tamu said. "It's not the MiTT and the Iraqi Army; it's just 3-5-6. We're all together in this. We're doing what has to be done now so that our kids and grandkids don't have to be doing it all over again down the road."

"We trust these guys enough to fight alongside them," said Pfc. Josh Bartoli, a driver and Weirton, W.V., native with the team. "That should say enough."

Norrie and the team hope that they don't have to occupy a different area again. They had built up a reputation with the people of Haifa and in Hateen, and they hope to do the same for the people in the new area.

Two days after encountering the sniper, the team and its counterparts were back on the street accomplishing the mission they started out to fulfill.

They finally got to hand out all the backpacks and care packages to the kids on the streets.

"It's all about strengthening relationships with the people," Norrie said. "We all believe the future of this country belongs in their hands. They are the force to put an end to this violence. If not them, then who else?"